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Benedict, Ruth F.

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RUTH FULTON BENEDICT

A Memorial

VIKING FUND, INC.

NEW YORK

1949



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RUTH FULTON BENEDICT 1887-1948

A Memorial

VIKING FUND, INC.

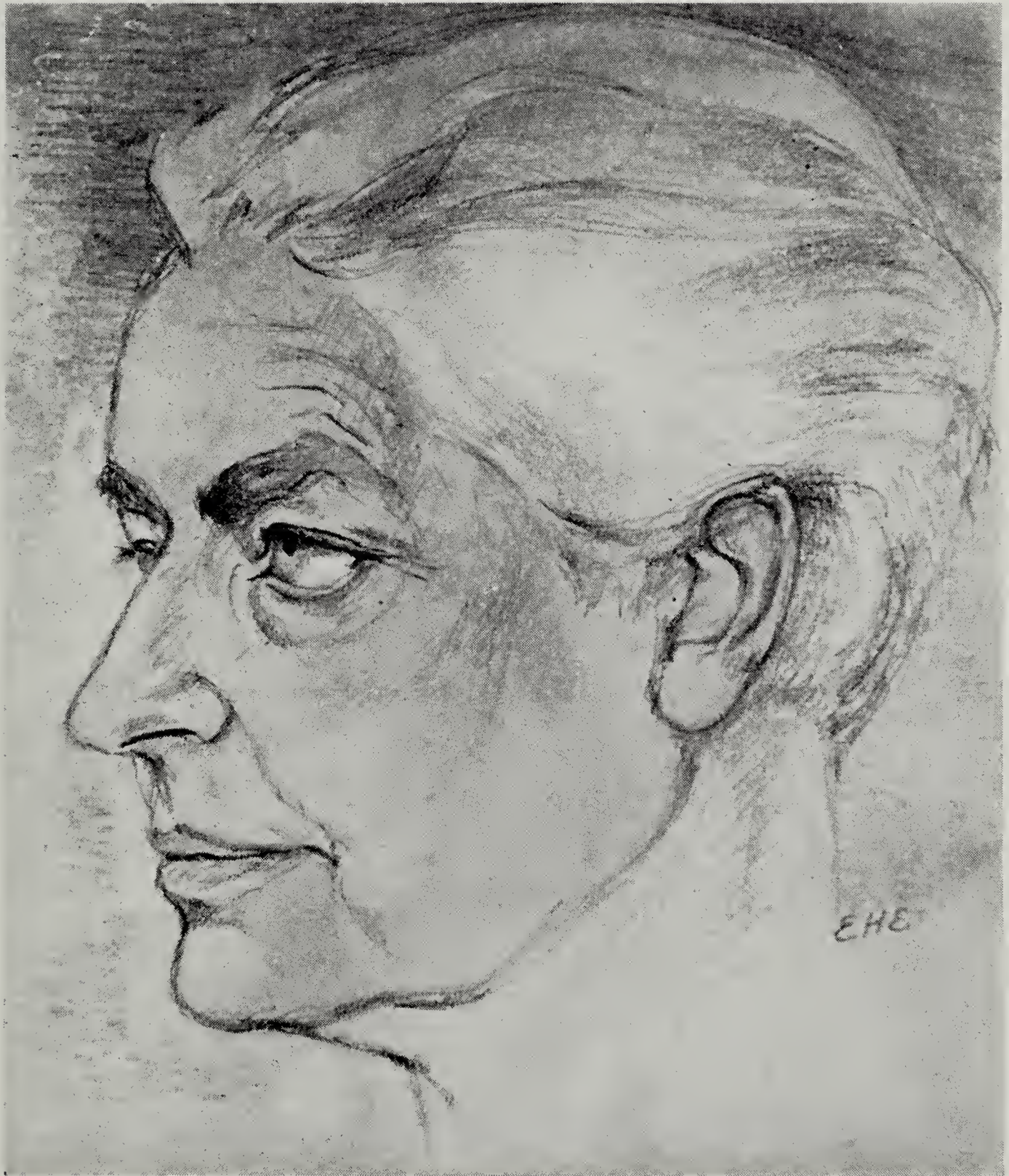
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PREFACE

On November 4, 194⁸~~9~~, a memorial meeting was held at Viking Fund for Ruth Fulton Benedict, whose death on September 17 had shocked her friends, students, and colleagues. The present publication is a record of this meeting, for arranging which appreciation is tendered Dr. Paul Fejos, Director, by all anthropologists as well as Ruth Benedict's friends.

There ~~is~~ added also the memorial minute presented to the two faculties of which she had been a member at Columbia University; a chronological record of her life; and a bibliography, as complete as possible, prepared by Mary E. Chandler.

A. L. KROEBER

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THE MEMORIAL MEETING AT VIKING FUND

RECORD OF A GATHERING
IN REMEMBRANCE OF
RUTH FULTON BENEDICT

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1948

AT

VIKING FUND

14 EAST 71 STREET

NEW YORK

SPEAKERS:

CORA DUBOIS, *Department of State*

ERIK ERIKSON, *San Francisco*

CLYDE KLUCKHOHN, *Harvard University*

ROBERT LYND, *Columbia University*

MARGARET MEAD, *American Museum*

ALFRED KROEBER, *Presiding*

By ALFRED KROEBER:

"You who have walked the misted meadowlands
And crushed their petalled colors of bright gold,"

—so wrote Ruth Benedict of this season in which we are gathered in recollection of her.

Born in this city in 1887, reared in Buffalo, graduated at Vassar, Ruth Benedict, having married, came to Anthropology after the first flush of youth. She was thirty-five when she undertook her first field studies, among the Serrano, in California; thirty-six when she completed her doctorate with Boas and was named editor of the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*; thirty-seven when she was appointed Lecturer in the Department of which she remained a member and where she became Chairman and Professor.

Her fieldwork fell in two main periods: on American Indian reservations in the twenties; and again, in the forties, in urban centers with Asiatic and European literate informants. Between, she produced her most famous book, *Patterns of Culture*, which became at once a milestone in the development of Anthropology.

Complex strands wove through the fabric of her professional work. Dominant, as well as earliest, was the concept that all culture is structured in and through patterns, these organizing forms being its most characteristic quality.

Next was the idea that for the culture of any given society there might often be a pattern of patterns, or master pattern, in which the culture would be summarized. Third was the notion that a felicitous psychological label or designation might fruitfully characterize such a summation. Again, her thought worked from the premise that to every cultural constellation there corresponded a psychological aspect, expressed in a personality type originating in the culture, conditioned by it, and reflecting it, yet desirable to formulate in its own psychological terms also.

Finally, Ruth Benedict possessed a feeling for cultural values that was as profound as it was subtle, and that pervaded and colored every other phase of her work. As she wrote:

"For what is the meaning of life except that by the discipline of thought and emotion, by living life to its fullest, we shall make of it always a more flexible instrument, accepting new relativities, divesting ourselves of traditional absolutes? To this end we need . . . something of respect for the epic of our own culture, something of fine tolerance for the values that have been elaborated in other cultures than our own."

She was in herself completely fine-grained; surcharged with feeling, yet irrevocably tolerant. Reserved as a person, restrained in expression, yet sympathetic and kindly, she was civilized utterly and without abatement, and dedicated to civilization.

"We hope—" she said—"we hope a little, that whereas change has hitherto been blind, at the mercy of unconscious patternings, it will be possible gradually, in so far as we have become genuinely culture-conscious, that it shall be guided by intelligence."

By CORA DuBOIS:

Because many of you, here and not here today, knew Ruth Benedict so much better than I, and because it is so difficult to speak in measured terms under these circumstances of Ruth Benedict, I felt that I must write what I wanted to say.

This group does not have to be reminded of the debt they owe Ruth Benedict. The subtlety and originality of her insights in the field of anthropology have become part of our common equipment. Had Ruth Benedict not been our colleague and teacher, many academic generations might have elapsed before her contributions to our science acquired the particular focus and validity she gave them.

It is not to this common agreement among us that I wish to speak. We may need instead more clearly to remember that Ruth Benedict was both a personality and a singularly distinguished and respected *representative* of our profession in the eyes of American, Asiatic, and European intellectuals, and that that respect was deserved and freely given. Her career, unfortunately, was not so long as that of her intellectual mentor, Franz Boas; her range of interests was neither so heterogeneous nor her research so meticulous; nevertheless her influence on contemporary thought was commensurate with that even of Boas himself.

Partly the source of that influence lay, it seems to me, in Ruth Benedict's rare personal qualities. These qualities were: an integrity of a level rarely achieved in these days of market place standards; an unstinting generosity toward the infinitely varied persons who sought her advice, and sometimes too insistently, her assistance; and lastly as well as most importantly, a rare sensitivity in matters both of the intellect and of the feelings. Her personality was subtle, complex, encysted, and in later years highly dedicated. Her personality was one in which malice and aggression were singularly unvoiced; it was one in which dispute was an intolerable derogation not only of the self but of others. Achievement was a means of self-expression, and not a weapon of self-assertion. She

gave, and commanded for others, compassion—which is not a fashionable emotion but one we cannot yet afford to outlive.

Yet her dignity discouraged the familiarities which compassion seems so often to evoke in an age where humaneness and dignity rarely coexist. A large part of Ruth Benedict's dignity and integrity was born of a sense of good and evil which bore no trace of puritanism but rather seemed rooted in those universal values which still belong to the realm of the spirit rather than of the mind. Her opposition to what she conceived as evil was uncompromising.

Those of us who had the good fortune to know Ruth Benedict first as students and later as colleagues have been deeply enriched. We knew a person who was concerned with the transmission of wisdom, not the teaching of a trade. We, and those who have not the benefit of that relationship, and those who will no longer have the opportunity for such a relationship, are impoverished.

I am sure that Ruth Benedict would not approve even these self-evident expressions of appreciation. And here another deeply felt element of her personality is manifest—that profound modesty without, however, a trace of self-derogation, which combination, it seems to me, marked the largeness of her character.

We who knew her will miss her guidance; her professional field is crippled by her loss; and all the many little people of the world who need so badly a humane mind in places of influence and of the intellect have lost a protagonist.

Ruth Benedict's work will continue. Her influence on all of us was too profound for it to lapse.

But that quality with which she endowed all she did and thought, we have not seen, and may not see again, in others of our professional generation.

By ERIK H. ERIKSON:

I am very grateful for the privilege of joining you in this testimony of Ruth Benedict's living and unique image. Each of us, who knew her, knows that it will be with him as long as any vision remains. But what can we say to one another to share our common possession of that image?

Shall I speak of the relation Ruth Benedict had to my field, psychoanalysis? She accepted psychoanalysis as a major humanistic critique of the discontinuities which our civilization forces upon its children. She accepted it concretely, and worked assiduously in her cultural studies to uncover data the relevance of which had become clear through Freud's work. Her acceptance was intuitive, not systematic and argumentative. Of systems and creeds, Ruth Benedict was merely tolerant. As a humanist, she warned against the biologizing of human behavior, be it in the crude form of racism or the refined projection of "human nature." She showed how every step in the unfolding of physiological potentialities in the human child carries with it the experience of a cultural continuity or discontinuity; a sense of being at home, or a sense of being one's own worst enemy. She said:

"Insofar as we invoke a physiological scheme to account for neurotic adjustments, we are led to overlook the possibility of developing social institutions which would lessen the social cost we now pay."

Here we found common ground for debate and for further search.

But it is not along these lines that I can express what to me is most important about Ruth Benedict. Permit me, for a few minutes, to tell you of more personal things. When I saw Ruth last June, in California, I asked her to sit for a sketch. She was the fourth person in a year or so who had evoked in me—a dealer in words—this irresistible urge to document a face by drawing it. As I sketched Ruth I thought of the others.

The first had been an old Jewish woman from Mt. Carmel in the State of Israel. Visiting California, she had impressed us all

with the new sense of dignity and identity which her work had given her: the work of tending her grandchildren, freeborn Jews in their own State.

The second was a grand old woman of the pueblo community of San Ildefonso in the American Southwest. In perfecting her black pottery she has given new life to one of the oldest arts.

The third was an old skier in the Sierras who as a youth had come from his native Finland to the then lonely country around Lake Tahoe, to range the snowbound trails between the early power stations.

Before Ruth came I had asked myself why I had wanted to sketch these people. Was it easier to draw old people because of the depth and finality of their facial lines? Or was I getting old, and looking for people who seemed to make aging worthwhile? Ladies and gentlemen, I would not steal this time to discuss autobiographic items with you, were it not for the fact that I found an answer to my question when I sketched Ruth Benedict; and what more can we say of any human being than that, by his mere being, he becomes to us not a question, not an argument, but an answer?

I wish the sketch itself could, as it should, convey what I mean. Let me try to say it.

Here was a person who was not vitally healthy any more. Yet she was not sick. She seemed so calm that to ask whether she was happy in any conversational sense would have seemed incongruous.

Here was a friend, who was deeply alone, who had, in fact, stopped fighting loneliness. She had begun to befriend death, without in any way inviting it or being demanding of it.

Here then, was a consciously aging woman, who looked as much like a young girl, as she looked like a man, without being in the least juvenile or mannish.

Here was a woman who had been denied motherhood, but who had encompassed with motherly care her experiences, her observations, and her thoughts. She did not argue. But when she wrote she dealt with thoughts as a mother deals with impatient

children, reconciling content and form until they befriended one another.

Here was an American who had learned to live beside and beyond boast and achievement. In her poetry she had struggled to find words for that other pole, which seems to signify the inner crisis of the observant American. She had gone so far as to call it "faith in failure." For to her victory was to be only a means to a mature end. She warned:

"Strength is good, but not among the victors.
They march in step on roads they have not chosen,
They handle weapons not theirs, and carve an idol
For fools. But their dream is frozen."

In her book on Japan she fulfilled her function in this nation by adding thoughtful understanding to the very vigor of victory, adding the chrysanthemum to the sword.

Above all, here was a scientist, who had focused her analytic gifts on the differences between people and people, not in order to forge weapons of discrimination nor even of "scientific" manipulation, but in order to understand the crowning purpose of being individual and of being different: a particular style of simplicity and serenity.

In doing so, she herself acquired what I now saw was the common good of these four old people, Ruth's as well as the Palestinian's, the Finn's, and the Indian's: some of the beauty and simplicity, some of the faith and serenity, announcing clearly and indestructibly the near fulfilment of a life cycle which has found accord with the moral and esthetic realization of its community.

There is tragedy here, we know. Ruth was too young to be completed and detached. What the personal, or if you wish, clinical, reasons for this were, I did not make it my business to know. Let us not forget that she lived in the thick of an intellectual battle, which puts living on the defensive; and that it literally takes strength to fight and to feel, all the time.

What I have said I have not said in Ruth's praise. I have said it because we owe it to ourselves to think it and to remember it, for the sake of our personal fortunes as well as for the focus of our further work. Beyond that, we respect her choice; she wrote:

It shall be ended, and no victory
Bind laurel in your hair. Wherefore to you
Should they come bannered with the red and blue
Your eyes are mazed with always? Let it be
Enough for you that never anyone
Unblinded sees the glory that you see,
Enough that you have looked upon the sun.

By CLYDE KLUCKHOHN:

As one who was not in a formal sense a student of Ruth Benedict's but who yet derived a major part of his theoretical orientation from her, perhaps I may be permitted to record a few fragments from the history of our personal association.

I recall as if it were yesterday the deep sense of excitement with which I read *Patterns of Culture*. The following winter I saw Ruth Benedict for the first time at the Andover meetings of the American Anthropological Association. My dominant impression was that of her rare beauty and of the profound sensitivity of her face. The next spring I met her at the home of mutual friends from the Southwest. An awed graduate student, I tried to keep the conversation at the level of polite conventionalities. But within a few moments she was both making me feel relaxed and happy and also skillfully interviewing me on the details of my experiences with Southwestern Indians. Those who think that Dr. Benedict was interested mainly in somewhat tenuous abstractions have surely never had an extended conversation with her about their or her field work. This particular talk of ours was still going so vigorously in the small hours of the morning that we both missed our subway stops, only realizing that we were already in Brooklyn when we had completed our discussion of an obscure point of Navaho ceremonialism.

During the war it was my great good fortune to be closely associated over a long period in work with Ruth. I learned tremendously from her, even though I never got a neat formulation of her methods which I could pass on to students and colleagues. However, my observation leads me to believe that, with some justice, they could be stated about as follows: saturate yourself in the materials on a given culture, reading everything you can lay your hands on and interviewing as diverse a group of informants as possible; formulate some tentative hypotheses that seem to arise out of the data; then test these hypotheses by seeing whether you can predict what will come in new material obtained by reading,

observation, and interview; if prediction fails or is incomplete, reject or re-phrase the hypothesis and test the revision on still further material.

When I was in Japan in 1946-7, I was astonished to discover the extent to which I knew what was coming in unformalized situations or contexts not covered by my reading. This was primarily due to what Ruth had taught me both in conversation and in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Before I went to Japan, my admiration for that book was great. When I left, my respect was enormous. There are errors in fact, and this is unfortunate. Some aspects of the interpretations are more fully applicable to late Tokugawa or early Meiji than to contemporary Japan. Yet the perception of the essential dynamics of Japanese personality and culture without field work in Japan is perfectly extraordinary, granting all the qualifications that must be made for regional, generational, class, and other variations.

The fact that Dr. Benedict's last published paper is her presidential address on "Anthropology and the Humanities" is a happy symbol, for she was one of those great anthropologists who was equally a great humanist. Like Edward Sapir, Ralph Linton, and a few others she wrote distinguished poetry which is not as well known by her anthropological colleagues as one could wish. In conclusion, I should like to read three brief poems which give us a glimpse of some facets of this very rich and very complex personality.

WORDS IN DARKNESS

There shall come beauty in a silver rain
Out of the storm-hung heaven of my soul.
Let me remember seasons that have lain
Heavy as this with darkness and the roll
Of the on-coming thunder, and were yet
Distilled to showers crystal-cool and white
Beyond the gift of sunshine; heedless, let
The storm close cold upon me, and the bite
Of sand be on my breasts, nor question why
The silver fingers of the rain are wrought
Out of a maddened tumult and a sky
No man of all would willingly have sought.

MYTH

A god with tall crow feathers in his hair
Long-limbed and bronzed, from going down of sun,
Dances all night upon his dancing floor,
Tight at his breast, our sorrows, one by one.

Relinquished stalks we could not keep till bloom,
And thorns unblossomed but of our own blood,
He gathers where we dropped them, filling full
His arms' wide circuit, briars and sterile shrub.

And all alone he dances, hour on hour,
Till all our griefs have blooming, and our sleep
Is odorous of gardens,—passing sweet
Beyond all, wearily, we till and reap.

NOVEMBER BURNING*

Meadows, the harvest done, the kernelled corn
Filched for the granaries, are given to flame,
To flame that fashions of dry useless things
Brief flowers of no name.

But in November the gold broken stubble,
Its sap yet lingering, life waking still,
Shall blossom in no fire; smoke is harvest
Of an autumn hill.

Let be, the bleak long winter, and the field
Guard precious its stubble; let no shower
Of April mildness stir its roots to life,
Let no stalk come to flower.

Come spring, set torch to tinder, and the flame,
Not hooded now, not clogged with happiness,
Lift clean its strong bright limbs; let the dead find
Life's apotheosis.

* By permission and courtesy of *Poetry*, Chicago.

By ROBERT LYND:

I assume that my role here today, as a representative of the teaching staff at Columbia, is to attempt to convey something of the sense of loss we, her immediate colleagues at the University, feel in Ruth Benedict's death.

First, I shall speak of the students. Amidst the gray fog of impersonality that handicaps teaching at a great metropolitan university, Dr. Benedict remained always a person in contact with other persons. Her courtesy and imagination with students—those from other departments as well as from her own—have for years been one of the things that gave human vitality to our campus. Student problems were to her as real as her own, a thing by no means as obvious or common as it might seem in our profession, particularly as we teachers grow past the overflowing energies of our youth. Just two days ago a European student came to my office. We finished the immediate business in hand, and then she lingered on. There was something more, and slowly it came: hunted for years as a Jew in Germany, her husband killed, the new beginning of her studies in America, the appalling loneliness of New York. "I had found a friend at last in Professor Benedict—and now", she said quietly, lifting her hands in a gesture of helplessness, "she is gone." I sat near the back of the University Chapel the day Ruth was buried. The thing that struck me about the crowded chapel was the unusual number of students. Something so many of us needed had gone from our midst.

We members of the faculty are never quite prepared for these abrupt losses among us. I suspect that this is particularly acute in a setting like New York where the divisiveness of a great city adds to the barriers set up by preoccupation with our several disciplines. So I stand here today, as I imagine would scores of my colleagues, swept by the feeling that there were so many only half-asked questions, so many places where I might have dipped deeper into Dr. Benedict's incisive wisdom. We met in committees and student oral examinations, we stopped each other on the street

—always her half-shy smile, always her instant directness in giving her whole self freely in these touch-and-go encounters.

Dr. Benedict experienced what are, I imagine, the all too familiar obstacles women meet in the male world of our graduate schools. She was not awed by men, nor was she intimidated; she had the spunk to get research funds without so much as a "By your leave"—; and she did distinguished research with those funds.

When there was the problem of the moving of the Department of Anthropology into the Faculty of Political Science, the Faculty at Columbia under which the other social sciences are grouped, the shift was desirable and long overdue from the point of view of all of the other social disciplines. But there was an obstacle, around which gray-haired professors tip-toed, whispering anxiously: it would involve bringing a woman into the Faculty. And as a distinguished colleague, now dead, had remarked, "The Faculty of Political Science is a very exclusive gentlemen's club." In the end, virtue and the twentieth century triumphed, and again, it was a matter of profound satisfaction to see Dr. Benedict sitting serenely with us at the next Faculty meeting.

I think back gratefully to the period a decade ago when Dr. Benedict worked with a group, including Wesley Mitchell and Ernest Minor Patterson, on the Executive Committee of the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom. Month after month we met over the angry issues raised across the country by reactionary trustees and school boards. Again, she was the only woman in the group; and as always her quiet courage and decisiveness counted heavily.

It is somehow disconcerting to see how even a relatively small institution like a university faculty goes on about its manifold business after the death of one of its members. This is as Dr. Benedict would have wished it, for she was one of the genuinely unselfconscious people who believed in the living and made no demands for lingering personal recognition. She has gone from

among us; but her colleagues and a whole generation of students stand up the straighter because she has been one of us.

By MARGARET MEAD:

I was Ruth Benedict's first student when she began teaching in 1922: that quarter of a century has covered my whole professional life. During that period I saw her develop the serenity, the sense of meaning, which Dr. DuBois has described. I saw anthropology come to mean not simply a valid form of work which was still opposed to the rewards of the spirit—which to her meant poetry—but a form in which man's search for an understanding of the world about him, and his search for an understanding of his own spirit, could be blended. The two themes in her own life were expressed, in her scientific work, in her interest in the deviant personality as opposed to and given meaning by the pattern of a culture.

From early childhood, she had been conscious of an acute sense of difference from those around her. The forms which were offered her by her society seemed curiously inadequate to contain some of the things she saw. When the poor servant girl's suicide was condemned, but the suicide of an ancient Roman was held up as a model—by the same mentors—she was puzzled. She early formed the habit of reserving something of herself as she went, often cheerfully enough, about the daily business of living. And during her college years and the early years of her marriage, when she still hoped for children, she continued the restless search for an explanation of the discrepancies between the individual's vision and the words and images which his tradition offered to him. She did not yet call this tradition, culture. But she tried, experimentally, a number of things, dancing, social work, excursions into the biographies of those who had been at variance with their age—most of all poetry.

The first appeal of anthropology was in its revelation of how very differently men had made, and so could make, their lives, that there could be other civilizations in which the disallowed vision had a rightful place. This she saw as a knowledge which could breed gentleness in those fortunate ones whose culture fitted them

like a glove; it could breed a forlorn selfless hope in those who found themselves strangers among their own people, that others of their kind might somewhere, sometime, be at home. It could also change the face of the earth, if men once learned the manner of a culture's making, well enough to fashion it closer to their heart's desire.

In her early anthropological writing she was interested in documenting how very different the world looked to American Indians, with the undertone of "In the beginning God gave to every people a cup of clay, and from this cup they drank their life—our cup is broken." This she originally used in an article called "Cups of Clay" that was never published. Later she shifted to the vigorous sense of program of "The Science of Custom;" and when she used the same quotation in "Patterns of Culture," the last sentence was omitted. The deviant ceased to be either a tragic or merely pathetic figure, and became more and more a measuring device against which the pattern itself could be understood. The sharper the appreciation of the deviance, the keener the recognition of the strength of the pattern.

Slowly the two parts of her life grew together to cover over the scars of a long battle between her two selves, a battle which she had hoped to resolve by bearing children who would be at home in the world. At the time that "Patterns of Culture" was written, the conflict was still only partly over. She wrote her poetry under another name, Anne Singleton, and kept it rigorously separate from her anthropological life. She had recognized that she would never be able to say—in poetry—what she wanted to say; her deafness seemed to halt the rhythm, so that the words could not sing. But in "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword" she wrote, not out of a duty to anthropology, but to her self, a book which combined her sense of the strength and internal consistency of the cultural pattern, and the special poignancy of the human spirit trapped always in ways which limit its full expression.

As she attained the serenity of these later years in which there

coalesced a poetry that she felt had failed her, and a sense of responsibility that she had learned shelling peas in the old farm kitchen at Norwich with grandparents who believed in their culture—as these finally coalesced into a prose which belongs as much to literature as to science, still she did not forget. She kept her memory of each step fresh. The unusual student, the wanderer from one discipline to another, the middle aged and still unplaced, those who asked questions which were so personal as to seem irrelevant to a less sensitive ear—all found an attentive listener. This gentleness toward deviance came to be written in her face, in the cadence of her voice, in the welcome she gave to all who, troubled, questioned.

She had less patience for those who either felt that they knew the answers, or who even hoped that some day all the answers would be known. Her allegiance to the idea of the unrealized potentialities of man was so great, that all closed systems offended her. As passionately as she longed for patterns of culture in which the presently disenfranchised would find a place, so also she was pledged to a view of history as a quest, which was blessed in the very circumstance that the quest was endless.

And she, to whom religion was a state of the spirit, neither an orthodoxy nor a ritual, wrote:

EUCCHARIST*

Light the more given is the more denied.
Though you go seeking by the glittering seas,
Each cliff etched visible, and all the waves
Pluming themselves with sunlight, of this praise
Light makes her sophistries.

You are not like to find her, being fed
Always with what she shines on. Only those
Storm-driven down the dark, see light arise,
Her body broken for their rainbow bread
Above a wreck-white sea.

* By permission and courtesy of *The Nation*, New York.

From RUTH BENEDICT'S RESURGAM:

Now is the season of our mourning past
And reek forgotten, the white loveliness
Of ivory ours to play with. Now at last
Our griefs are overspanned, decay played out,
And nothing dead but it is perfected.

MINUTE PRESENTED AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

TO FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY BY HORACE L. FRIESS

TO FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE BY W. DUNCAN STRONG

The death of Ruth Fulton Benedict, Professor of Anthropology, occurred in New York on September 17th, 1948. She had returned from abroad ten days earlier, and apparently was in good health after a summer of much accomplishment in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Professor Benedict died suddenly at a high point of activity, distinction, and public service. She was at the time Director of Research in Contemporary Cultures, an extensive project in the analysis of European and other cultures, supported by the Medical Services Branch of the Naval Research Office (USN). In Czechoslovakia last summer she also conducted an intercultural seminar for UNESCO. In 1947 she was President of the American Anthropological Association. In the ranks of intellectual leadership and scholarship her death means a great loss, as it does in the University community.

Born in New York in 1887, and reared in Buffalo, she received her A.B. degree from Vassar College in 1909. She did not begin her studies in anthropology until ten years later, having meanwhile taught English in Pasadena, California, married Dr. Stanley R. Benedict of New York in 1914, and published poems in various journals under the name of Anne Singleton. Beginning in 1919, she studied anthropology with Franz Boas, and took her doctor's degree at Columbia in 1923, where she became a lecturer in Anthropology in the same year. Her research expeditions in the 'twenties were chiefly among the southern California and Pueblo Indians, but included also the Apache, Blackfoot, Mission, and Kwakiutl tribes. She edited the *Journal of American Folklore* from 1923 to 1939. She became Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Columbia in 1931; Associate Professor in 1938; and Professor in 1948.

The imaginative side of culture and folklore deeply interested her, and this interest gave rare quality to her teaching and publi-

cations on primitive religion and mythology (*Tales of the Cochiti Indians*, 1931; *Zuni Mythology*, 2 vols., 1935). She combined the insistence of her teacher, Franz Boas, on scientific precision with an artist's sensitivity to concrete meanings and values. As a result she avoided artificial and irrelevant generalization. From the beginning she was concerned to discover actual contexts and patterns of culture in which specific facts had their living meanings. This emphasis is already evident in her first book on *The Concept of the Guardian Spirit in North America*, 1923.

Professor Benedict's influence in the development of anthropology is connected with this central idea that culture is not an aggregate of traits, but is meaningfully structured in and through organizing patterns. Her book *Patterns of Culture*, 1934, has brought this idea before the literate public in general. She was not looking for the origins of culture-patterns, but trying to identify them as living actualities, and to describe their pervasive effects. She did not propose psychological explanations, but did emphasize the psychological implications of culture-patterns, the extent and depth to which behavior and personality take form in them.

She was not a closet scholar. As World War II approached, she increasingly gave her attention to matters which she felt were of the greatest public moment. For her book *Race, Science, and Politics*, 1940, and other writings on race and cultural relations, she received several awards. From 1943-46 she undertook studies of Japanese and south-east Asian cultures for the Office of War Information. The Japanese study was published in 1946 under the title *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*.

The relation of behavior and its values to cultural diversity did not for Ruth Benedict mean surrender of responsibility for evaluation. It meant a broadening and sensitizing of such responsibility by fuller understanding of the actual meanings of behavior and institutions. "We need," she wrote, "something of respect for the epic of our own culture, something of fine tolerance for the values that have been elaborated in other cultures than our own."

"We hope a little, that whereas change has hitherto been blind, at the mercy of unconscious patternings, it will be possible gradually, in so far as we have become genuinely culture-conscious, that it shall be guided by intelligence."

Professor Benedict was a member of the Faculty of Philosophy, and of the Faculty of Political Science, and all three graduate faculties might dispute whether her contributions were most valuable to pure science, political science, or to philosophy. But none of us will dispute that she was one who made a difference in our profession by the scope and wisdom of her thinking, and the quality of her personality. She was a generous and beloved teacher. She was a person completely fine-grained; surcharged with feeling, yet irrevocably tolerant. Reserved as a person, restrained in expression, yet sympathetic and kindly, she was civilized utterly and without abatement dedicated to civilization.

HORACE L. FRIESS

ALFRED KROEBER

ROBERT S. LYND

WILLIAM DUNCAN STRONG,

Chairman

CHRONOLOGY*

LIFE

Father, Frederick S. Fulton, physician.
Mother, Beatrice J. Fulton, teacher.
1887, Born June 5, in New York City.
1914, Married Stanley R. Benedict (died 1936).
1948, Died September 17, in New York City.

EDUCATION

1909, A.B., Vassar College.
1918-19, New School for Social Research.
1923, Ph.D., Columbia University.

POSITIONS HELD

1923-30, Lecturer in Anthropology, Columbia.
1930-36, Assistant Professor.
1936-39, Executive Officer of Department.
1936-48, Associate Professor of Anthropology.
1948, Professor.
1941, Anna Howard Shaw Memorial Lectureship, Bryn Mawr College.
1944-45, Lecturer, Washington School of Psychiatry.
1947-48, Director, Research in Contemporary Cultures, Office of Naval Research. Contract for Cultural Study of Certain Minorities of European and Asiatic Origin in New York City.

WAR RECORD

1943-45, Head, Basic Analysis Section, Bureau of Overseas Intelligence, Office of War Information.
1944-45, Social Science Analyst, Foreign Morale Division, Office of War Information.

HONORS, AWARDS, OFFICES

1927-29, President, American Ethnological Society.
1945, Fellow, Washington School of Psychiatry.
1946, Vice-President, American Psychopathological Association.
1946, American Design Award for War Services.
1946, Achievement Award, American Association of University Women.
1947, President, American Anthropological Association.
1947, Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences.
1947, D. Sc. (Honorary), Russell Sage College.

* Compiled by Margaret Mead, Lolita Binns, and Alfred Kroeber.

FIELD STUDIES

- 1922, Serrano.
- 1924, 1925, Zuni.
- 1925, Cochiti.
- 1926, Pima.
- 1931, Mescalero Apache, student training direction.
- 1939, Blackfoot, student training direction.

EDITOR

- 1925-39, Journal of American Folklore.
- 1936-40, Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology.
- 1942-44, Member of Editorial Board, The American Scholar.
- 1946, Assistant Editor, Psychiatry.

BOOKS AND MONOGRAPHS

- 1923, The Concept of the Guardian Spirit in North America. American Anthropological Association, Memoir 29.
- 1931, Tales of the Cochiti Indians. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 98.
- 1934, Patterns of Culture. Boston, Houghton Mifflin.
- 1935, Zuni Mythology. 2 volumes. New York, Columbia University Press.
- 1940, Race, Science, and Politics. New York, Viking Press.
- 1946, Patterns of Culture. Reprinting in Pelican Series. Penguin Books.
- 1946, The Chrysanthemum and the Sword. Boston, Houghton Mifflin.

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1926

"Serrano Tales", *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. 39, pp. 1-17.

1927

Review: *Actes des Congres International d'Histoire des Religions*, Paris, 1923, in *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 24, pp. 608-612.

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1928

Poem: "Eucharist", *Nation*, Vol. 127, September 26, p. 296. (Pseudonym, Anne Singleton.)

Poems: "Earthborn", "For The Hour After Love", "For My Mother", "I Shall Not Call", "Intimacies", "Lift Up Your Heart", *Poetry*, Vol. 31, January. (Pseudonym Anne Singleton.)

"Psychological Types in the Cultures of the Southwest", *Proceedings. Twenty-third International Congress of Americanists*, pp. 572-581.

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Review: *L'Ame Primitive* by L. Levy-Bruhl, *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 25, pp. 717-719.

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1929

- Poem: "Death is the Citadel", *Nation*, Vol. 128, February 20, p. 231. (Pseudonym, Anne Singleton.)
- Review: *The Sexual Life of Savages* by Bronislaw Malinowski, *Books* (New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review), July 28.
- "The Science of Custom", *The Century Magazine*, Vol. 117, pp. 641-649.
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- Reprinted in Seminar on Human Relations, Anthropology, 1934, Vol. 1, Section 1. Columbia University Department of Anthropology, New York, N. Y.

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- Review: *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee; Teil 2 Die Religionen der Urvölker; Band 2; Der Religionen der Urvölker Americas* by P. Wilhelm Schmidt, S.V.D., *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. 43, pp. 444-445.
- Review: *Growing Up in New Guinea* by Margaret Mead, *Books* (New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review), September 21.
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- "Victory Over Discrimination and Hate; Differences Versus Superiorities", *Frontiers of Democracy*, Vol. 9, pp. 81-82.
- "We Can't Afford Race Prejudice", *Frontiers of Democracy*, Vol. 9, p. 2.
- (With M. Ellis) "Race and Cultural Relations: America's Answer to the Myth of the Master Race", *Problems of American Life*, No. 5, p. 60, National Council of Social Studies, National Association of Secondary School Principals, Department of the National Education Association.
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- Review: *Becoming a Kwoma, Teaching and Learning in a New Guinea Tribe* by John M. Whiting, *Journal of Social and Abnormal Psychology*, Vol. 37, pp. 409-410.
- Review: *The Crisis of Our Age and Social and Cultural Dynamics* by P. Sorokin, *New Republic*, Vol. 106, p. 154.
- Review: *Escape from Freedom* by Erich Fromm, *Psychiatry*, Vol. 5, pp. 111-113.
- Review: *Principles of Anthropology* by E. D. Chapple and C. S. Coon, *Psychiatry*, Vol. 5, pp. 450-451.
- Review: *Propaganda for Democracy through Public Opinion* by Harold D. Lasswell, *Saturday Review of Literature*, Vol. 25, No. 19, March 7.
- Review: *When People Meet* by Alain Locke and Bernhard Stern, *Books* (New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review), February 8.
- Review: *Indians of South America* by Paul Radin, *Books* (New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review), April 26.
- Review: *Men Before Adam* by Anne Terry White, *Books* (New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review), December 27.

1943

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- "Recognition of Cultural Diversities in the Postwar World", *Annals, the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, Philadelphia, Vol. 228, pp. 101-107.
- "Two Patterns of Indian Acculturation", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 45, pp. 207-212.
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- Review: *Hiroshima* by John Harvey, *The Nation*, Vol. 163, pp. 656-658.
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1947

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1948

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1922

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1933

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1935

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1936

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1937

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1938

Lecture: *The American Cultural Pattern*, before the Department of Agriculture, Washington, February 25 (Typewritten).

1940

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1941

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1946

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1947

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"The Strategy of Freedom"; "To Secure the Blessings of Liberty"; "Academic Freedom" (unfinished writeup of a lecture); "America's Racial Myths" (a lecture at Iowa University); "Application of Anthropology to Social Problems" (Office of War Information Broadcast to Italy); "The Origin of Death in Mythology"; "Ethics in North American Indian Mythology"; "Ideologies in the Light of Comparative Data"; "The Bond of Fellowship"; "Japanese National Character"; Lecture delivered at a luncheon of the Southern Conference; Lecture delivered at Yale; Speech at dinner in honor of Malvina Hoffman; "The Facts about Race" (in longhand); "Answer to Pearl Buck"; "Natural History of War"; "War and Peace" (in longhand); "Education and Cultural Process"; "Proposal for a Training Seminar in the Culture and Character of Contemporary European Nations"; Remarks at a seminar on Democracy and World Unity; "The Myth of the Black Baby"; "If I Were a Negro"; Article beginning "I am an Anthropologist"; "The Problems of Anthropology"; "Primitive Religions" (lecture before the Society for Ethical Culture, New York); Discussion of a paper by Jules Henry on the Pilaga; "Science and Race"; "Culture and Personality" (written for the Columbia University Research Council); "Beyond Cultural Relativity" (written for the No. 35 Project of the Columbia University Research Council); "Post War Race Prejudice"; "Can Cultural Patterns be Directed?"; "American Welfare Concepts in Terms of Norwegian

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